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MARRIAGE

C. G. 585 The marriage customs of the Georgians are regulated by Christianity. The wedding rites go back to the ceremony of the Byzantine court: crowns are held over the heads of bride and groom, who are addressed as "queen" and "king." After the ceremony in the church the wedding is celebrated publicly in the house of the bride; the feast may last several days. Then the bride is brought to the house of the groom in a noisy procession on horseback. She is welcomed by her mother-in-law, who puts a lump of sugar or other sweets into her mouth; then she is led around the hearth, and a male child is put on her knees to ensure fecundity. The Georgian mountaineers (especially the Khevsur) have to a certain extent preserved customs similar to those found among the N. Caucasian mountaineers.

C. 583 The marriage customs of the North-Caucasian peoples (including the Ossetes) were only to a minor extent influenced by Islam or Christianity, and preserved older traits. In the whole area from the N. W. to the Andi-Dido region in Dagestan, there are clear traces of a tradition of acquiring brides by capture and abduction. At the same time, in the whole N. Caucasus the custom of paying a bride price (R. kalym) prevailed. Originally, the C. 581 personal preference of the girl was not taken into account at all, the marriage being arranged by her family on the basis of social or

581 economic considerations. In more recent times, under the influence of Islam, Christianity, and also of the Soviet regime, it has become a more important factor.

583 The mixture of various traditions can be exemplified by the Circassian usages. It was customary for the suitor, with the help of his comrades, to abduct his bride from the house of her parents. Often the kalym had been agreed upon beforehand, but the family of the bride nevertheless put up a token of resistance against the abduction. In cases where the family was against the marriage, elopement was not uncommon. A night spent 582 by the girl with her abductor made her his lawful wife according to the Circassian adat; later, a marriage contract drawn up by the mullah gave the marriage its legal sanction; now, marriages are regulated by Soviet law.

In Dagestan, local endogamy is observed more or less strictly; in the rest of the N. Caucasus, and also among the Georgian mountaineers, exogamous rules prevail. [587] Formerly, the levirate and stepmother-inheritance were widespread among the Caucasian mountaineers; there was also a strong insistance upon marrying within one's social rank.

585 Among all the Caucasian mountaineers observing exogamy, there existed a variety of avoidance rules. E.g., the bridegroom would hide during the wedding feast and afterwards only secretly visit his wife, who after

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This deficiency of female mates is certainly one of the main reasons for the infrequency of polygyny despite the great value placed on the institution.

The statistics given for Chechnia reveal a similar situation. And, according to Vertepov, the disproportion was especially great in Ingushetia, 115 men to every 100 women.[37] This is indeed striking because Grabovskij claimed, as we have seen, that plural marriages were "very frequent" in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[38] "Many" Ingushi had two wives and sometimes three.[39] Even "poor" Ingushi had additional wives.[40] The frequent cases of polygyny in Ingushetia in spite of the unusual surplus of men can perhaps be explained by the strict obligation of the widow to marry her deceased husband's brother. According to Kovalevskij, the levirate among the Chechens was, practically speaking, an obligation, whereas among the Lesghians it was facultative *(infra*, pp. 71 f). Levirate would also explain why even "poor" Ingushi were polygynists; it would also explain why "many" Ingushi had more than one wife.

The sex ratio of the Lesghians, as presented in our statistics, differs somewhat from that of the rest of the Caucasians. Here, in Daghestan, we do have districts with a preponderance of female sex, but it must be noted, the difference is so small that the surplus women could hardly make polygyny a frequent practice. Thus the Avar, Andi, Gunib, Dargwa, Kazikumuk, Kurin and Samur provinces all have practically a 100:100 ratio. The Kaitago-Tabassaran Province has the highest proportion in favour of women, but the difference 100:105 is insignificant. Hence, the balance between the male and female population is a contributing factor to the infrequency of polygyny.[41]

But besides this biological reason there is the universally valid economic reason. Supposing that there were a surplus of women in the Caucasus, there would still be great financial difficulties that would prevent polygyny from becoming general. The poor Caucasian considers himself quite fortunate if he manages to gather enough jingling rubles or mooing cows to purchase one wife, let alone a second or a third.[42] In fact, even the rich Caucasian would find it difficult to purchase a second wife, because the bride price always corresponds to the economic and social position of the contracting parties. Ladyženskij expressly maintains that what keeps the Kabardian and the Cherkess in general

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[37] G. Vertepov, "Inguši," *Terskij Sbornik*, II (1892), No. 2, p. 99.

[38] Grabovskij, "Ekonomičeskij i domašnij byt žitelej gorskago učastka Inguševskago okruga," SSKG, III (1870), p. 21. Dubrovin is of the same opinion: *Istorija*, Tome I, Bk. I, p. 430.

[39] Grabovskij, *l. c.*

[40] Grabovskij, *l. c.*

[41] In 1926 the sex ratio for Daghestan was practically a perfect balance, 100:103 in favor of the female sex (383,000 males to 405,000 females). F. Nansen, *Through the Caucasus to the Volga*, p. 96.
According to official statistics of 1930 there were more men than women living in the *cities* of Daghestan (1,000 men to 931 women); in the country the proportion was 1,000 men to 1,048 women. R. Kherumian, "Contribution à l'Anthropologie du Caucase," *L'Anthropologie*, LII (1948), No. 1—2, p. 44.
It seems to be quite natural that the city population should show a preponderance of male sex: a considerable portion of the city population are labourers and merchants from various parts of Caucasia, Russia, and Armenia.

[42] A. Ladyženskij, FT, p. 195.

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from polygyny is, above all, a shortage of rubles.[43] The same holds for the Avars,[44] and, as we learn from Sveščin,[45] for the other Lesghians as well: the economic factor plays an important part in making polygyny relatively rare. Klaproth found the institution a veritable luxury in Ossetia, being only for the richest of the rich,[46] in full harmony with the Ossetine *adats* which reserve the right for the two richest classes, the princes and the *aldars*.[47] Grabovskij's report[48] that even the *poor* Ingushi were polygamists we have partially explained by obligatory levirate, which was just as much obligatory for the rich as for the poor. Moreover social stratification (which generally coincides with wealth and poverty) was practically non-existent during Grabovskij's visit in Ingushetia (*infra*, pp. 60 f); therefore, if polygyny is to be found among the Ingushi at all, it must be found also among the "poor" class.

Easy divorce may do away with plural marriages as it did in Khevsuria and Svanetia, but in North Caucasia easy divorce plays only a very insignificant rôle compared with economic and biological factors.

§ 2. THE RULES OF ENDOGAMY AND EXOGAMY

Lowie defines exogamy as "the rule which prescribes that an individual must find a mate outside of his own group, whether that group be the family, the village or some other social unit."[49] The opposite rule "which makes it compulsory for a man to mate within his group is labeled endogamy." Lowie rightly stresses that it is not the *de facto* marriage within one's own group but the *prohibition* of marrying outside it that constitutes endogamy.[50]

1. The Impediment of Consanguinity

Consanguineous marriages are strictly prohibited throughout NORTHWEST Caucasus. In his expedition of 1927 Ladyženskij ascertained that the reports of earlier writers about the abhorrence of incest among the tribes of Northwest Caucasia still exists today. Marriages between members of the same sib, regardless of the degree of remoteness, are considered incestuous.[51]

Among the NORTHEASTERN peoples the practice is not uniform. Ingushian adats are by far stricter than Islamic law in regard to marriages between

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[43] *ibid.*

[44] L'vov, "Domašnjaja i semejnaja žizn Dagestanskich gorcev avarskago plemeni," SSKG, III (1870), p. 20.

[45] D. Sveščin, "Očerk narodonaselenija nravov, i obyčaev Dagestancev," ZKO, II (1853), p. 64.

[46] J. Klaproth, *Voyage au Mont Caucase et en Géorgie*, II, p. 249.

[47] *Leontovič, Adaty kavkazskich gorcev*, II, p. 12, § 10; p. 14, § 27; p. 16, § 40.

[48] "Ekonomičeskij i domašnij byt žitelej gorskago učastka ingulevskago okruga," SSKG, III (1870), p. 21.

[49] R. Lowie, *Primitive Society*, p. 16.

[50] *op. cit.*, pp. 16 f.

[51] J. Reineggs, *Allgemeine historisch-topographische Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, II, p. 9; Ladyženskij, FT, p. 198.

Chapter IV

Freedom of Choice

000 After we have shown which individuals are regarded as possible mates, we arrive at the second fundamental question: Who has the decisive word in selecting a definite mate from among the many possible ones? We shall have to answer such questions as: "Has the couple the decisive word?" "Has the young man more to say about his partner than the girl about hers?"

§ 1. THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE A MATE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

584 [581] The NORTHWEST CAUCASIANS, the Abkhaz and the Cherkess, regard marriage as a family affair. It is not a contract between two *individuals* but between two *families*, joint-families or sibs. The male head of the household has the right to marry off his child to whomsoever he wishes.[1] He has the sole *right*; whether he *uses* that right or not is an entirely different matter.

When speaking about the actual practice we must make the necessary temporal and local distinctions. Before the Revolution the Kabardians, contrary to Hahn's superficial observations,[2] paid little attention to the wishes of their daughters, whereas the Shapsugs, Abadzekhs, and Bzhedukhs generally considered the girl's preferences and even tried to act accordingly. After the Revolution (1920), the Soviet régime refused to recognize any marriage unless it had been entered upon freely. To a large extent this legislation had the desired results, but not entirely, for compulsory marriages still occur today.[3]

Since there is less family interest in the girl than in the boy (the girl is married off into a *strange* family), it is not surprising that more consideration is given the future groom than the bride. But we do not wish to say that the preferences of the male children are always regarded more than those of the [582] female. Infant betrothal[4] has always been possible in Circassia and therefore there is no question of male children having a *right* to choose their mates. *De jure* both sexes are on the same level; *de facto* the wishes of the boys are generally complied with more than those of the girls.[5]

142 583 One can hardly pick up a book on the Cherkess without coming across a paragraph or two about the unusual beauty of their women. Some authors go

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[1] V. V. Vasil'kov, "Očerk byta temirgoevcev," SMOMPK, XXIX (1901), No. 1, p. 99.

[2] C. Hahn, *Kaukasische Reisen und Studien*, p. 39. The questioning of the bride was a mere formality.

[3] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 197. Castagné, *op. cit.*, 1929, No. 2, p. 259.

[4] N. Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 139.

[5] Ladyženskij, *l. c.*

p. 76 1 [sic--Analyst]

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so far as to give them the title of the "most beautiful women in the world." Whether they, or perhaps the Mingrelians or others, deserve this title does not concern us here. What does matter is the conviction of the Turks and Persians that Cherkess women are beautiful. It is said that the eunuchs of Persia used to lay down their lives for them, and today, it is a known fact, that the Turks are still willing to pay immense sums to have these singularly beautiful women in their harems. No wonder then, that bride-markets were not unusual in Circassia in the nineteenth century. And even today they are still operating, using of course the black-market technique. What we wish to emphasize is that the girl sold on the bride-market is not sold *against* her will. She is not sold as a slave, even though slave-traders are the middlemen of the actual purchasers. She is not sold against her will; no, she is proud to be sold, proud to see a man give up all he has just to win her. If it is not pride that makes her so eager to be sold on the bride-market, then it is ambition. These girls have dreams just as our girls do, though of a somewhat different type. In Turkey they will be sold to a *rich* man; they will be given a *comfortable* lodging, an excellent *education*. Dreams these are indeed, great dreams that can be realized only outside of their own homeland and only in a Turkish harem, only on the bride-market![6]

The NORTHEASTERN CAUCASIANS. The Chechen girls according to their own native *adats* have very little to say about their future husbands. They must wait till their father (or if he is dead, their eldest brother) marries them off to whomever *he* thinks is best,[7] and, primarily, of course, best for the family, for marriage is a family affair. Child-engagements[8] are again a proof that not even the male children enjoy the *right* to choose their mates.

decision of the Ingushi, no marriage was to be considered valid unless the bride

§ 118 of the "*Adats* of the Ingush Province in the 1860's" calls for special attention. It reads: "Since the end of 1862, according to an unanimous decision of the Ingushi, no marriage was to be considered valid unless the bride had freely consented."[9] The *adat* collection then goes on to give the motive for the decision (§ 156): "Till very recently (1862) a woman was regarded as a slave: she enjoyed no human rights. Turning a deaf ear to her plea and protests, disregarding her sobs and tears, her family would sell her off like a ram, throw her on a cart, and deliver her to her husband."[10] Such a miserable bride, the collection tells us, would in most cases run away from her purchaser. But where could she flee except to her own family — unfortunately the same persons who sold her into "slavery"? Her family, however, had to return the fugitive to her lawful husband, for the contract had to be observed to prevent bloodshed. She would then run away again, and even a third time, making life

[6] Cf. Essad-Bey, *op. cit.*, pp. 202—207. Longworth, *A Year among the Circassians*, I, p. 279.

[7] Cf. The general *adats* for the Black Sea Line, Kuban and Terek Territories, Leontovič, II, p. 251, § 148. *Adats* of 1843 for all Chechens, Leontovič, II, p. 112, § 8. *Adats* of 1864 for the Chechen tribes of Salati, Aukh, and Ichkeria, Leontovič, II, p. 144. Adats of the 1860's for the Ingush Province, Leontovič, II, p. 169. A. P. Berže, Čečnja i Čečency, p. 97.

[8] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, pp. 427.

[9] Leontovič, II, p. 169, § 118.

[10] "*Adats* of the Natives of the Ingush Province in the 1860's," Leontovič, II, p. 174, § 156.

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584 regard for their wishes.[27] Today, of course, the Khevsurs[28] and the Pshavs[29] no longer force their daughters into any particular marriage.

The OSSETINE *adats* give the father the sole right to decide the mates for his sons and daughters. Child-engagements[30] and child-marriages[31] are not rare. The consent of the future bride and groom was generally asked for, but again, here as elsewhere in the Caucasus, it was usually a mere formality. In pre-Soviet Ossetia a well-bred girl was forbidden to manifest her preference for any particular man. She always had to "agree" and in no way show her displeasure. If she wanted to avoid marriage, suicide was sometimes the only means of escape.[32] But fortunately this means was very seldom resorted to; instead, the unhappy bride preferred to be the "slave" of her husband[33] for the good of the family. Mating was determined not so much by the mutual attraction of the bride and groom as by the will of the heads of the two families.[34]

The TURCO-TARTARS. The *Nogai* often betroth their children before they are seven years of age,[35] a custom universally practiced by the Turkic peoples.[36] Among the *Karachai*[37] and the *Kumyks*[38] it is again the head of the family who has the decisive word. In practice, however, the Kumykian girl seems to enjoy considerable freedom. A suitor must first propose to his beloved and only if the answer is in the affirmative ("If my family agrees") may he approach his own father and then the family of the prospective bride.[39] A refusal 583 on the part of the girl's father generally would lead to elopement.[40]

§ 2. IMPLICATIONS IN THE LACK OF FREEDOM OF CHOICE

In spite of the fact that the Caucasus is looked upon as an ethnographical museum, we find very little variety in regard to the right and practice of choosing mates. Everywhere, at least formerly, it was the father and he alone who had the right to arrange marriages for his children.

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[27] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, ii, p. 309.

[28] Enad-Bey, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

[29] G. Demidov, V učel'jach pervodbytnoj gruzii (Chevsuretija), Moscow, Leningrad, 1930, p. 17.

[30] Leontovič, II, p. 51, § 15.

[31] Dirr, AGKB, p. 121; Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 334; Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, pp. 177 f, 192 f.

[32] Kovalevskij, op. cit., p. 193. In primitive societies suicide is seldom occasioned by disappointed love. Most of the time it is, as with the Ossetes, a rebellion against marrying a person the girl abhors (cf. Steinmetz, "Suicide among Primitive Peoples," *The American Anthropologist*, VII, p. 55.

[33] Dubois de Montpéreux, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 449.

[34] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 333.

[35] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 277.

[36] H. Vámbéry, *Das Türkenvolk*, p. 109.

[37] Klaproth, "Voyage au Caucase," *Nouvelle Bibliotheque*, XI, p. 170.

[38] Semenov, "Očerki narodnych obyčaev Kumykov," *Terskij Sbornik*, II (1892), No. 2, Part 2, p. 68.

[39] Gadži-Magoma-Debirov, "Dagestanskija predanija i suevěrija," SMOMPK, IV (1884), No. 2, p. 32.

[40] Gadži-Magoma-Debirov, *l. c.*

Chapter V

Means of Acquiring a Wife

§ 1. BY PURCHASE

1. Description of Customary Laws

583 "Bride purchase," as Lowie points out, is a blanket term for various transactions. It fits some cases indeed, but at other times it is a complete misnomer.[1] Such is certainly the case when speaking of the Caucasians. Some tribes actually have a bride *purchase*, while others do not; some may have *had* the custom too but the nature of the payment has so completely changed in the course of years that it is false to speak of a price any longer. In some cases the "bride-price" is nothing more than a symbol; or again it is a mere exchange of gifts, or finally a security for the wife, resembling the *donatio ante nuptias* of the Romans. We shall use the term "bride-price" only in its strict sense. But since a generic term embracing all financial obligations connected with the acquisition of a wife is indispensable, we shall use the native word (*kalym, irad* etc.) or "bride wealth" whenever such a general expression is needed.

[177] The NORTHWESTERN CAUCASIANS. Since the Cherkess have been subject to a rather unusually rapid acculturation in the past 150 years, it is not surprising that the bride-price of old should in the course of decades have taken on many new features. Instead of presenting a complicated historical description of the Cherkess bride-price from its beginning to its disappearance, it will be much better, I think, if we borrow and sum up Ladyženskij's conclusions.[2] (1) Up to the end of the nineteenth century the bride was actually *sold* (p. 197), and consequently regarded as a chattel. (2) Islamic law improved her position, in so far as a considerable portion of the payment became the property of the bride as a security in case of divorce. A portion of the payment was likewise set aside to cover the expenses of the wedding (p. 198). (3) From the end of the nineteenth century this modified form of bride purchase assumed a different meaning: the bride was no longer *sold* in the strict sense. Rather, the family of the bride deserved to be compensated for the expenses involved in rearing a child till it attained a marriageable age. It deserved to be compensated also for the loss of a valuable worker. With such motives in view the Cherkess considered the *kalym* as a form of *captatio benevolentiae* of the entire sib of the bride, for the *kalym* was shared by all (p. 197). (4) Today the *kalym*

[1] R. Lowie, *Social Organization*, p. 99. See his excellent section on "Bride Wealth," pp. 99—102.

[2] Ladyženskij, FT, pp. 197 f. Castagné, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

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By Purchase

has in places disappeared completely, namely in the modern cities, where both partners earn money before their marriage (p. 197), while in other places it has disappeared officially, continuing only as a secret practice (p. 197). In 1921 the bride wealth fluctuated between Rs. 500 and Rs. 1,000 (p. 198).

Generally the *kalym* is so high that the entire joint-family of the prospective groom must share the burden. According to Cherkess customary law, when a joint-family decides to split into several units and consequently the common possessions must be divided, a portion must first be set aside as *kalym* for the unmarried sons.[3] Sometimes the joint-family cannot afford to "purchase" a wife and hence all relatives, near and distant, must contribute,[4] and, if it be necessary, also the entire *tleush* (*supra*, p. 55).[5] The burden is greatly eased by the possibility of paying the *kalym* in instalments.[6]

The amount to be paid has always been subject to great variations. Before a daughter is given in marriage, the amount of the bride wealth must be agreed upon by both families. Not only are the particular personal qualities of the prospective wife taken into account, as, for example, her virginity,[7] but especially the social standing of her family.[8] The higher the rank (and, as we have seen above, the ranks of the Cherkess are endless) the higher the bride wealth demanded. Thus at one time a maiden of the *uzden* class cost as much as Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,200. One hundred years ago the price was somewhat lower: Rs. 500 for a maiden of the princely class and Rs. 300 for a widow; Rs. 350 for a maiden of the uzden class of the first order and Rs. 200 for a widow; Rs. 220 for a maiden of a lower *uzden* sub-class and Rs. 150 for a widow; Rs. 150 for a maiden of the free class and Rs. 100 for a widow. Dubrovin tells us that this payment went to the father, brother or paternal uncle of the bride, and if she had neither father, nor brother nor paternal uncle no *kalym* was necessary.[9] Sometimes slaves were used as payment.[10]

We have said nothing about the Abkhaz, for in essentials and even in many particulars they agree perfectly with the Cherkess. In fact, the marriage and family *adats* of the Abkhaz and those of the Cherkess are so much alike that Ladyženskij regards the Abkhaz as a Cherkess tribe.[11]

The NORTHEASTERN CAUCASIANS. As elsewhere in the Caucasus, the *kalym* in Ingushetia and Chechnia may consist of money, cattle, arms and

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[3] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 206.

[4] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 140.

[5] Longworth, *A Year among the Circassians*, I, p. 234.

[6] Neumann, *Russland und die Tscherkessen* (1840), p. 117.

[7] "Adats of the Black See Line, Kuban and Terek Territories," Leontovič, II, p. 253, § 162.

[8] Leontovič, II, p. 253, §§ 163—165. V. V. Vasil'kov, "Očerk byta temirgoevcev," SMOMPK, XXIX (1901), No. 1, p. 90, sets the bride-price of the Termirgoi as follows: for an ordinary peasant girl Rs. 600; for a girl of noble birth Rs. 1, 500; for a princess Rs. 3,000.

[9] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 140 f.

[10] *ibid.*

[11] We do not of course accept this faulty classification. The Abkhaz, Ubykhs, and Cherkess are *distinct* peoples.

583 other objects.[12] Although the amount is much more stable than in other parts of Caucasia, it does vary according to the presence or absence of virginal integrity and on the social class of the mates.[13]

In the eighteenth century the Nakhchuo paid up to 10 cows;[14] the Ingushi would have to pay as many as 30 cows.[15] In the 1860's the average *kalym* was about 18 cows (or if paid in money, Rs. 10 per cow).[16] In the twentieth century the *kalym* was so high that the Russian Military Government forced all young men to swear that they would never take or give more than Rs. 105 *kalym*, but, as Baddeley, who is averse to all exaggeration, assures us that "none kept the oath, and the amount was now greater than ever."[17] In 1920 the Ingushi of the Upper Uchaluk paid as much as one million Soviet rubles, 105 silver rubles, two horses, one cow and one ram as *kalym*.[18]

585 In the Ingush *adat* collection of the 1860's (§§ 119 f) we read that the relatives of the groom are obliged to offer the bride a gift of 25 silver rubles on the occasion of her betrothal, of which she becomes the full owner and administrator. On her wedding day she must also be given a guarantee amounting to 80 silver rubles in case of divorce or widowhood.[19] This *adat* is an innovation which owes its origin to Islamism and the Russian Military Government. Although at first it was received with very little favour (and even today we still can come across cases which may be classified under strict purchase), this new form of bride wealth gradually prevailed throughout Ingushetia and Chechnia.[20] In a word, the Chechen bride-price has for about a century at least been tending to evolve into a form of dowry, an evolution analgous to that found among the Abkhaz and Cherkess.

[614] It is the obligation of the *taipan* (sib) to provide the necessary *kalym* for all male members, if necessary even by theft.[21]

The following table shows the average bride-price of about an hundred years ago.

TABLE 10

Average bride-price among the Chechens about A.D. 1850

583 587

District	Amount		Source
	For maiden	For widow	
Nazran	12 cows	21 cows; sometimes only 12	Leontovič, II, p. 117, §§ 9 f.

[12] Cf. "Collection of *Adats* of the Black Sea Line, Kuban and Terek Territories" Leontovič, II, p. 253, § 161.
[13] Leontovič, II, p. 253, §§ 162—165.
[14] Potocki, *Voyage dans les steps d'Astrakhan et du Caucase*, II, p. 127.
[15] *ibid.*
[16] Grabovskij, "Ekonomičeskij i domašnij byt etc.," SSKG, III (1870), p. 20, *note*.
[17] *The Rugged Flanks of Caucasus*, I, pp. 207 f. See also Vertepov, "Inguši," *Terskij Sbornik*, II (1892), No. 2, p. 132.
[18] N. Jakovlev, *Ingušli*, p. 53, *note* 1
[19] Leontovič, II, p. 169, § 119.
[20] Jakovlev, *Ingušli*, p. 53.
[21] Jakovlev, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 53.

District	Amount		Source
	For maiden	For widow	
Kists	18 cows	12 cows	Leontovič, II, p. 118, §§ 18 f.
Dzherakh *	30 cows	20 cows	Leontovič, II, p. 116, §§ 1 f.
Sunsha *	10 cows		Leontovič, II, p. 123, § 1.
Ingushi **	18 cows		Grabovskij, op. cit., p. 20.

* The adat collection actually speaks of rubles and not cows; the approximate value in cows is based on Grabovskij's estimate, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

** In 1864.

Before we pass on to the Lesghian group we wish to mention an interesting form of *kalym*, parallels to which can be found in various parts of the world.[22] We refer to the practice of marrying two deceased persons. Toward the end of the 18th century Potocki observed that "if one Ingush lost a son and another an unmarried daughter, the father of the deceased girl would approach the family of the deceased son and say, 'Your son most likely still doesn't have a wife; I'll give him my daughter, who passed away some time ago, provided that you give me so and so many cows as kalym.' In such a case the father of the dead boy will never refuse."[23] The *kalym* is in such cases generally lower than usual.[24]

When speaking of the Lesghians we must keep in mind that we are dealing with a group strongly influenced by Islamic law, much more so than the rest of the Caucasians. We must also remember that there are local and temporal variations to be taken into account. There are four distinct financial transactions connected with Lesghian marriages: (1) genuine bride purchase, (2) symbolic bride purchase, (3) gifts, (4) the *kebin*, a guarantee against divorce.

Many recent and older authors speak of a "very trivial bride price."[25] Abercromby, for example, reports that the *kalym* of the Avars was no more than two rubles and eighty kopeks.[26] Hahn claims to have found it as low as 25 kopeks.[27] Before Shamyl's time it was supposed to have been possible to "purchase" a wife for a trifle: at Ishal, for instance, for 36 quarts (12 *garncy*) of wheat; in Bahulal it was only one *sab* (about 20 pounds) of grain; in Untsukul it amounted to one ruble.[28] Despite the poverty of the mountaineers, the *kalym* is so insignificant that to classify it under "bride-price" would be incorrect. This is not a case of bride purchase at all, but rather a formality or symbol, which may be at most a *vestige* of actual marriage by purchase.

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[22] For the custom among the Chinese see Vanicelli, *La Familia Cinese*, pp. 393—403; among the Germans of the Volga see E. G. Kagarov, "Venčanie pokojnikov u nemcev Povolž'ja," SE, 1936, No. 1, pp. 106 ff. O. Schrader, *Totenhochzeit*, 1904.

[23] Potocki, *op. cit.*, II, p. 127.

[24] B. Dalgat, "Die alte Religion der Tschetschenen," *Anthropos*, III (1908), p. 737.

[25] For instance, F. Nansen, *op. cit.*, p. 104; Byhan, *op. cit.*, p. 191; Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 178.

[26] *op. cit.*, pp. 96, 101. The "bride-price" was therefore only 5 s. 10 d., less than $ 1.00.

[27] Hahn, "Putešestvie v Kachetiju i Dagestan," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), p. 93.

[28] A. Runovskij, "Kodeks Šamilja," *Voennyj Sbornik*, XXIII (1862), No. 2, p. 347.

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583 [562] We do not wish to say that bride price in the strict sense of the word does not exist in Daghestan at all. The unfavourable position of the female sex in Botlikh is rightly attributed by Rossikov and Erckert to the fact that she is still considered as purchased property, as chattel.[29] The *iol-puli* of the North Tabassaranians was anything but trivial.[30] In the "Adat Collection of the South Daghestanian Districts" we learn that it varied between Rs. 100 and Rs. 400, a maiden costing more than a widow.[31]

Even in localities where the *kalym* is so insignificant that it is actually only a symbol there are certain, and by no means trivial, expenses which must not be overlooked. First of all, there are not a few betrothal gifts (*infra*, pp. 102 f); then there are the relatively expensive marriage gifts, of which we shall speak below when describing the Lesghian wedding (*infra*, p. 119).

[584] There is, moreover, the so-called *kebin*, a guarantee against divorce. Just because it is the bride who benefits from the *kebin*, it cannot be considered as a bride-price. It is a security for the bride in case of divorce and is usually determined by mutual agreement, depending, of course, on the economic and social position of the contracting families. A widow of the *uzden* class, for example, never received more than a guarantee of Rs. 55.[32] In the province of Kazikumukh (Lak) and Dargwa the *kebin* usually consists of a piece of land having a value of Rs. 50 to Rs. 200.[33] Among the Kapuchians it consisted of money, about Rs. 10 to Rs. 20, while among the Tabassaranians up to Rs. 40. In the Avar Province the *adats* do not fix a definite amount, leaving it entirely to the two families concerned.[34] In North Tabassaran the guarantee was usually between Rs. 15 and Rs. 40 for a maiden and Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 for a widow.[35] The [177] *kebin* (*mahr*, *kebin-khak*, *magar* as we sometimes find it in Russian literature) evidently owes its origin to Mohammedanism.

The SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS. Eristov speaking of the Khevsurian custom of about one hundred years ago informs us that the bride received no dowry but that a price always was insisted upon.[36] Similarly, the Pshav would marry his daughter only if he first received a satisfactory price for her.[37] It is [585] worth noting that the Ingiloi (the Georgians of Sakataly) had to pay a higher kalym for widows than for virgins, Rs. 75 and Rs. 50 respectively.[38] The reason for this regulation seems to be that the widow being older is more liable to be divorced and has less chance of re-marrying than a young girl, and therefore needs a higher *kebin*.

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[29] K. N. Rossikov, "Poězdka v Čečnju i Nagorny Dagestan," ZKO, XIII (1884), p. 248. R. Erckert, *Der Kaukasus*, p. 284.

[30] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 179.

[31] "Adaty Južno-Dagestanskich Obščestv," SSKG, VIII (1875), p. 32.

[32] Svečin, "Očerk narodonaselenie, nravov i obyčaev Dagestancev," ZKO, II (1853), p. 64. For custom of the Avars see L'vov, "Domašnjaja i semejnaja žizn etc."

[33] Confirmed by Kovalevskij's own field work. See his *Zakon*, II, p. 179.

[34] *ibid.*

[35] "Adaty Južno-Dagestanskich Obščestv," SSKG, VIII (1875), p. 32.

[36] "O Tušino-Pšavo-Chevsurskom Okrugě," ZKO, III (1855), p. 113.

[37] *ibid.*

[38] Hahn, "Putešestvie v Kachetiju i Dagestan," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), p. 60.

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By Purchase

Much has been written about the OSSETINE bride wealth, but no one has described it so well as Kovalevskij in his *Sovremennyj obyčaj i drevnij zakon.* 583

Less than fifty years ago the expenses involved in a marriage were enormous. The families of the highest class in Kurtatinsk and Tagaursk had to pay as much as 100 oxen (worth about Rs. 1,000), one male slave or Rs. 120 and a coat of mail. In Kurtatinsk an equivalent number of cows could be substituted for oxen; a female slave or 12 oxen could be substituted for a male slave. The *farsaglegi* were valued at 60 cows or 30 oxen, whereas the *kavdassart kalym* was 25 to 38 cows. The Alaghirs never paid more than 38 oxen. An ox could be replaced by one cow and two sheep; a gun could replace six oxen; a sword, two or three oxen; a large chauldron for brewing beer, six oxen; a hearth chain, three cows.

Besides the *kalym* (or more correctly when speaking of the Ossetes, *irad*) the Mohammedan Ossetes are obliged to give a guarantee against divorce, the equivalent of the Lesghian *kebin*, called by the Ossetes *nakiash.*

Astounding is the number of gifts which the suitor's family was obliged to offer to the relatives of the bride. There was the *fati-bash, i. e.*, a horse called "The Arrow Horse" because the consent of the bride's father and the whole matchmaking procedure moved as swiftly and directly as an arrow; the *fati-bash* was given to the bride's father while her mother received the *madi-bash*, ("The Mother's Horse"). Then there was the *amtsedzhi-bash* ("The Nurse's Horse") which actually went to her husband (cf. *supra*, the *atalyk*, p. 57). The *madi-arvadi-bash* or *madi-arvadai-kal* was a horse given to the nearest relative of the bride's mother, most commonly to her brother. The Digorians usually offered oxen instead of horses.[39]

The sib must not be forgotten either. Besides the bride-price the prospective bride-groom had to give about Rs. 9 to the village, or, in other words, to the sib, for the Ossetine villages are generally composed of families related by blood. This payment was called *kauvendag* ("The Village Road").[40] Kovalevskij's figures differ but slightly from those of earlier ethnographers of the same century. Klaproth in his *Voyage au Mont Caucase et en Géorgie* (1828)[41] informs us that the highest *kalym* among the Ossetine nobles was Rs. 1,000 (hence about 100 cows). Dubois de Montpéreux,[42] whose investigations were published about 10 years after those of Klaproth, places the bride-price at 140 cows and 7 horses as the maximum and 12 cows as the minimum. In 1859 the Russians enacted a law according to which one third of the *irad* was to go to the bride as social security in case her husband should die.[43] This attempt to put an end to what the Russians considered a great abuse served only to raise the *irad* considerably. In fact, it reached an exceptionally high point in 1877, when to marry a single son would often bring complete financial

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[39] Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, pp. 163 f.

[40] Kovalevskij, *op. cit.*, pp. 175 f.

[41] II, p. 249.

[42] *Voyage autour du Caucase*, IV, p. 449.

[43] Leontovič, II, p. 51, § 17, *note 3.*

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ruin to the family.[44] Colonel Kondukov saw no way out: the *irad* had to be outlawed. In 1877 the Colonel promulgated a new law and then the following year the General Assembly confirmed it.[45] An attempt to eradicate such a deep-rooted institution by mere enactment of law is indeed always a futile attempt. A few years later the *irad* not only revived but was as high as ever. During his expedition in Ossetia Dirr could observe how the bride-price was sky-rocketing higher and higher and nobody could forecast when its descent would begin. The situation became so alarming that there was only one way left for the Ossete to acquire a wife, and that was to kidnap her at the risk of his life and at the risk of an endless feud between the families.[46] As late as May 15, 1911, the inhabitants of Mizur, Sadon, Dagon, Arkhon and Nuzal had to sign a promise never to offer or accept a higher *irad* than Rs. 200 for a maiden and Rs. 100 for a widow.[47]

Passing over to the TURKIC peoples of the Caucasus, we find the *kalym* (especially the *kebin*) no less stringently insisted upon than among the true Caucasians. In the beginning of the twentieth century the *kalym* among the Nogai was about 30 cows, the equivalent of about Rs. 170,[48] and as usual less for a widow than for a maiden.[49] The Kumykian *kebin* consisted in a written promise that a certain amount of money would automatically pass over to the wife in case of divorce or death of her husband, but only if she had no children to support her.[50] Among the Mountain Tartars and Karachai the amount of the *kalym* depended mainly on the social class to which the prospective mates belonged. The *kalym* of the Karachai varied between Rs. 350 and Rs. 1,000 payable in money or cattle[51] and was usually supplied by the entire sib.[52]

2. Conclusions regarding Marriage by Purchase

Before we sum up our conclusions we wish to review some of the more important data contained in the present section.

[44] By "ruining the family" we understand the joint-family, the "hearth" as the Ossetes express it.

[45] Kovalevski, *Coutume contemp.*, pp. 161 f.

[46] A. Dirr, AGKB, p. 122.

[47] *Tiflisky Listok* of June 17, 1911, cited by Dirr, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

[48] Jankó, "Néprajzi Gyüjtemény Leirása," in Zichy's *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[49] Haxthausen, *Studien über die inneren Zustände Rußlands*, II, p. 372. See N. Semenov, "Očerki narodnych obyčaev Kumykov Terskoj Oblasti," p. 72; "Adaty žitelej kumyskoj ploskosti," SSKG, VI (1872), p. 16; Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, pp. 277, 638.

[50] Dubrovin, *op. cit.*, p. 638, says that the *kebin* could be signed after marriage, usually being Rs. 750 for princely families and Rs. 100 for the nobility.

[51] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, II, p. 211; Klaproth, "Voyage au Mont Caucase," *Nouvelle Bibliotheque*, IX, p. 170; J. Jankó, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[52] U. Alijev, "The Karachai" (in Russian), cited by Ladyženskij, "Entstehung und Entwicklung des Staates bei den kaukasischen Bergvölkern," *Zeitsch. f. Völkerpsych. u. Soz.*, VI (1930), p. 435.

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TABLE 11

Marriage by Purchase in the Caucasus

PEOPLES			Existence of bride-price		Amount of bride-price		Existence of kebin	Who provides the kalym?	Amount of kalym depends on social rank
			Formerly	Recently	Virgins High	Widows Less*			
Caucasians	Northwest.	Abkhaz	+	+	+	+	+	Joint-family; Tleush	+
		Cherkess	+	+	+	+	+	Joint-family; Tleush	+
	Northcaut.	Chechens	+	+	+	+	+	Taipan (sib)	+
		Lesghians	+	±	+	±	+	Tokhum (sib)	+
	Southerners	Khevsurs	+	+	+				
		Pshavs	+	+	+				
		Tushi		−					
		Ingiloi				−			
Ossetes			+	+	+	+	+	Joint-family; sib	
Turks		Nogai	+		−	+	+		
		Kumyks	+	+	+	+	+		+
		Karachai	+	+	+	+	+	Sib	+

* Under "widows" we understand non-virgins, divorcées and widows.

(1) It seems that formerly all North Caucasian and neighbouring peoples bought and sold wives.

(2) In the last hundred years there has been throughout Northwest and Northcentral Caucasus a tendency for genuine bride purchase to disappear or

583 to assume the character of a dowry, as it had tended much earlier in Daghestan. A bitter struggle is going on between ancient *adats*, the *šarî'a*, and Russian laws.

(3) *Kølym* (even in recent times) is generally high.

[585] (4) Everywhere except among the Ingiloi and the Chechens of Nazran (*supra*, pp. 84, 86) the *kalym* and *kebin* are much higher for a virgin than a non-virgin. Virginity therefore is one of the most important factors in determining the amount of bride wealth.

[614] (5) Generally the family or a larger social group as the sib or *tleush* provide the necessary bride wealth. The groom never has to amass the *kalym* [581] himself, another fact clearly showing that mating is not a private affair.

(6) The *kebin* is found in all North Caucasia and Mohammedan neighbourhood.

[554] (7) Everywhere the social status of the partners is an important factor in determining the amount of *kalym* and *kebin*.[1]

The uniform evolution of the North Caucasian bride purchase is indeed striking. Originally all peoples of North Caucasus seem to have had actual bride purchase: the bride was actually sold and considered as a chattel. Then the bride-price began to lose its character of a purchase, a development contemporaneous with the spread of Islamism and Russian influence. Mohammedanism does not recognize bride purchase as such:[53] it recommends a bridal gift and prescribes the *kebin (mahr)* instead. The Russian Military Government in pre-Soviet times regarded bride purchase as a serious "abuse" and according to a decision of 1857 one third of the bride-price was to become the property of the bride as a form of social security.[54] Later the Soviet Government contributed its share in modifying the custom especially through industrialization, as we have seen is the case of the Cherkess living in the larger cities.[55]

583 554 That social rank should play such an imporant part in determing the amount of bride wealth (whether bride price, gifts or *kebin*) is quite natural, universal and in full accord with Islamic law.[56] In fact, according to Mohammedan teaching, the *walî mujbir* loses his right to marry his daughter or granddaughter against her will if the bride wealth does not correspond to the girl's social rank.[57]

Nowhere in the Caucasus has bride purchase been considered as something humiliating or degrading. After all, even the Cherkess princesses were purchased. The bride wealth corresponded to the social status and therefore added dignity to the purchase. Moreover, the higher the price the greater the social respect

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[53] Juynboll, *op. cit.*, p. 190. The *mahr* is also called *sakâk* in Islamic law.
[54] A. Dirr, AGKB, p. 124.
[55] *Supra*, p. 83.
[56] Juynboll, *op. cit.*, p. 215.
[57] *ibid.*

1 [i.e., bride-price and bride's security against divorce—Analyst]

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for the family accruing from such a purchase. And as anywhere else in the world, only *good* brides were bought. The fact that a girl was purchased was a kind of flattery and even a definite proof of her good standing. The "price-tag" remained attached to her for the rest of her life, and in it she could find sufficient food for her vanity and self-complacency.

Kebin occupies a middle position between an actual bride-price and a dowry. Like a dowry it aims at being a security for the bride's future, and like the dowry it is given to the *bride* and not to her family. On the other hand, it resembles the bride-price in as much as it is paid by the *groom's* family, it is accompanied with much bargaining, and, finally, the amount is determined according to the same standards as the bride-price.

We have said above that through the influence of Russian and Islamic law bride purchase has become more and more like a guarantee against divorce or security in case of widowhood. However, we did not wish to say that before the coming of Islamism or of the Russians there was no economic security given to the bride. A less developed and relatively small dowry or *kebin* could have existed in the Caucasus long before Islamic *mahr* "received full approbation from Allah." We know that, independently of Islamism, the position of the female sex was greatly improved by a dowry, e. g., among the Japanese, Chinese, Ancient Germans, Kelts, and Babylonians. The Romans and the Greeks regarded a marriage without a dowry practically as concubinage.[58] If it could exist among these peoples independently of Mohammed, it could have existed in the Caucasus independently of Islamism as well. In fact we find a kind of dowry in North Caucasus in the practical wedding gifts given to the bride by her family.[59] Of course, a large dowry is out of place in such a strongly exogamous society as we find in the greater part of North Caucasia, for the family property must remain within the family. On the other hand, from our description of the wedding customs we shall be able to observe the relatively important rôle these gifts play in the endogamous part of North Caucasus.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that bride purchase in the strict sense of the word fits into the Caucasian economic form of life quite well. Though bride wealth is found equally in mother-right and father-right societies, bride purchase in the strict sense is an institution found almost exclusively in pastoral societies or in societies that have been greatly influenced by pastoral peoples, or that have passed through pastoral stages, such as we find in Africa, Asia, and Europe. We do not find the bride-*price* in Australia, Melanesia, Polynesia or in America.[60]

§ 2. BY CAPTURE

"Bride capture" is just as much a blanket term as "bride purchase." Here too we must distinguish between genuine bride capture and various forms

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[58] Schmidt-Koppers, *Völker und Kulturen*, p. 310.

[59] Amirov, "Sredi gorcev severnago Dagestana," SSKG, VII (1873), p. 30 f.

[60] R. Briffault, *op. cit.*, II, p. 218; Westermarck, *History of Marriage*, II (1925), pp. 278 ff.

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● 583 of so-called capture. In the Caucasus we find four distinct forms: (1) involuntary (genuine) abduction, (2) planned abduction, which may be "planned" either by the lovers against the will of the fiancée's family (and this we may rightly identify with marriage by elopement), or (3) planned by the families of the bride and groom, (4) sham abduction, which is essentially a marriage ceremony.

In the present section by "capture" we understand involuntary abduction, against the will of the girl and her family. Planned abduction in accord with the will of the "stolen" bride's family needs no special extensive treatment and therefore will be considered briefly in the present section. Sham abduction will be treated among the other marriage ceremonies.

NORTHWESTERN CAUCASIANS.[61] Formerly marriage by capture was very common in Abkhazia.[62] Seidlitz calls it the *ordinary* means of acquiring a wife. To use his own words: "Vor fünfzehn Jahren noch raubte der Bräutigam sich gewöhnlich ein Mädchen zur Frau, indem er ohne Zustimmung der Eltern desselben und des Mädchens selber auf solches mit Hilfe seiner Altersgenossen einen Überfall machte, um es mit Gewalt zu sich zu entführen."[63] Today, of course, such cases are very rare. When they do occur, the lover generally believes that *post factum* the "bride" will be only too glad to remain with her ravisher.[64] Formerly the abductor was not persecuted if he could pay a sufficiently high bride-price.[65] Speaking of the Kabardians, Grabovskij assures us that genuine abduction occured very seldom among them,[66] while Dubrovin speaking of the Cherkess in general maintains that capture was a rather common means of acquiring a wife.[67]

The custom is found among the NORTHEASTERNERS as well[68]—in a word, among all North Caucasians. Numberless are the *adats* regarding the practice,[69] indicative of its importance in the life of the mountaineers.

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[61] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 197; J. Mourier, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 136, 141; Grabovskij, "Očerk suda i ugolovnych prestuplenij v kabardinskom okrugé," SSKG, IV (1870), pp. 36—42; N. S. Deržavin, "Iz oblasti Kavkazskoj etnografii," SMOMPK, XXXVI (1906), No. 2, p. 2; J. Castagné, *op. cit.*, p. 259; Vasil'kov, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[62] G. F. Čursin, *Očerki po etnologii Kavkaza*, Tiflis, 1913, pp. 146 f, cited by P. G. Akritas, "Svadebnye obyčai abchazskich grekov," SE, 1936, No. 4—5, p. 85.

[63] "Die Abchasen," *Globus*, LXVI (1894), No. 2, p. 40. Deržavin, *l. c.* Vasil'kov, *op. cit.*, pp. 89, 100 f.

[64] Castagné, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

[65] Cf. K. Mačavriani, "Nektoryja čerty iz žizni Abchazcev. Položenie ženščiny v Abchazii," SMOMPK, IV (1884), No. 2, p. 65.

[66] *op. cit.*, p. 36.

[67] *Istorija*, I, i, p. 133.

[68] Chechens: cf. Vertepov, "Inguši," *Terskij Sbornik*, II (1892), No. 2, p. 130, note; Grabovskij, *op. cit.*, p. 21 f; Jakovlev, *Inguši*, pp. 52 f; Berže, *Čečnja i Čečency*, p. 98. Lesghians: cf. L'vov, *op. cit.*, p. 20 f; Omarov, "Kak živut Laki," SSKG, IV (1871), pp. 20 f; Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, pp. 176 f.

[69] Cf. Leontovič, II, p. 118, § 18; II, 170 f, §§ 127—133; II, p. 174, §§ 155—159; II, p. 257, § 198; II, p. 121, § 1. "Adaty Južno-Dagestanskich Obščestv," SSKG, VIII (1875), pp. 9, 24 ff, 44 f, 48. ADO, pp. 20, 37, 64, 76 f, 90 f, 104 f, 117, 126.

The SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS. According to Eristov, about a century ago, bride capture was almost an every day affair in Khevsuria. In 1855 he wrote: "Bride-stealing is very common among these primitive people. You are not regarded as brave unless you steal the girl you are fond of, and she must, of course, come from a good family. Such an action will infallibly cause terrible quarrels, murders and feuds."[70] The Pshavs formerly resorted to bride capture too, but only rarely.[71] Dubrovin believes, however, that abduction occured frequently among the Pshavs and Tushi,[72] while Hahn claims the same in regard to the Ingiloi.[73] 583

For some reason or other, the collections of OSSETINE *adats* claim that abduction has either been always foreign and unknown in Ossetia or that it has disappeared leaving nót a trace behind. Kovalevskij rightly criticizes Leontovič's collection, for even during Kovalevkij's time one could come across occasional instances of genuine bride-stealing.[74] Other explorers of the late 19th and early 20th century (e. g., Karginov, Baddeley, Pfaf, Šanaev) leave no doubt about the existence of actual kidnapping in Ossetia.[75] Finally, if bride-stealing were unknown in Ossetia, why would special legislation against bride-stealing be necessary as late as 1911? The inhabitants of Mizur, Sadon, Dagom, Arkhon and Nuzal had to promise not to kidnap or cooperate in abducting women, under the penalty of Rs. 300, not including the bride-price which the offended family had the right to set as high as they wished.[76] [584]

[70] Eristov, *op. cit.*, p. 113; Seidlitz "Gemeinde- und Familienleben der Chewsuren," *Ausland*, (1891), No. 16, p. 378.

[71] S. I. Makalatija, "Iz starogo narodnogo byta Pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, p. 102.

[72] *Istorija*, I, i, p. 310.

[73] "Putešestvie v Kachetiju i Dagestan," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), No. 2, p. 60.

[74] *Coutume contemp.*, p. 167.

[75] S. Karginov, "Krovavaja mest' u osetin," SMOMPK, XLIV (1913), pp. 209 f. Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 75, 265; II, p. 124.

V. Pfaf, "Narodnoe pravo osetin," Sbornik Svědenij o Kavkazě, I (1871).

D. Šanaev, "Svad'ba u sěvernych Osetin," SSKG, IV (1870), pp. 1—30.

[76] *Tiflisskij Listok*, July 17, 1911, cited by Dirr, AGKB, p. 115.

TABLE 12
Lesghian Adats Regarding Abduction

Province (Okrug)	District (Obščestvo) or other division	Penalties for abducting an unmarried woman (girl, divorcée, or widow)			Marriage		engaged woman		married woman				Penalties for coöperating with abductor		Number of Foot note	Sources†
		Death penalty	Banishment	Bloodwite	Obligatory for abductor*	If father of bride consents ++	Usual penalties	Additional penalty	Death penalty	Banishment	Blood wite	"No case on record" §	By harbouring abductor	By coöp. in actual capture		
Avar			+	+		+	+		+			—			(1)	L'vov. p. 21
Gunib				+		+	+		+			—			(1)	L'vov, p. 21
Andi		+					+		+			—				Baddeley, II, 88
Lak		+				+	+		+			—				Kovalevskij, Zakon II, 176 f. Omarov, p. 21.
Kurin	Mahal Urdzhamul						+	+			+	—			(2)	AJuDO, 48
Kaitago-Tabassaran	Mahal Karakaitag			+		+	+	+							(3)	AJuDO, 44
	North Tabassaran			+		+		+							(4)	AJuDO, 24
Dargwa	Mikakhi											+	One ox	Various Penalties	(5)	ADO, 50
	Tsudakhar	+					+		+			—	One Ox		(6)	ADO, 116 f.
	Akusha			+		+	+					+	One Ox		(7)	ADO, 37
	Mugn	—	+				+						One ox (Rs. 4)	One ox	(8)	ADO, 63 f.
	Sirgua			+		+						+		Rs. 3	(9)	ADO, 77
	Hyuraki		+	+		+	+					+	One ox (Rs. 8)	One ox	(10)	ADO, 90 f.
	Usisha	+		+		+						+	Rs. 3	Rs. 3		ADO, 104 f.

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By Capture

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* The open spaces simply mean that the particular *adat* is silent.

‡ "If the father consents" in the last analysis means whether the abductor is able to afford the *kalym*, or, as the case may be, the *kebin*.

§ The *adat* collections expressly use the term, "no such case on record".
In any case, abduction of married women is extremely rare in such districts.
"Fines" as in all cases of cooperation are paid to the *dzhamat*, i. e., the community; "bloodwite" on the other hand goes to the offended sib.

† Abbreviations used: L'vov: N. L'vov, "Domašnjaja i semejnaja žizn Dagestanskich gorcev avarskago plemeni," SSKG, III (1870), pp. 1—32.
Baddeley: *The Rugged Flanks of Caucasus.*
Omarov, "Kak živut Laki," SSKG, III (1870), pp. 1—46; IV (1870), pp. 1—24.
ADJuDO: "Adaty Južno-Dagestanskich Obščestv," SSKG, VIII (1875).
ADO, "Adaty Darginskich Obščestv," SSKG, VII (1873).

(1) If the family refuses to give their daughter to the abductor, he is banished for three months, must pay a fine of 100 sheep to the khan (or Rs. 30), one head of cattle to the community. When he returns from banishment he must treat the girl's sib to a feast (Cf. L'vov, *op. cit.*, pp. 20 f).

If a married woman is abducted, the abductor becomes a blood-enemy just as in murder, but the period during which vengeance may be taken is shorter (L'vov, *op. cit.*, p. 21). Mere touch, chase, or suspicious approach may be punished like actual abduction. (*ibid*).

(2) By "engaged woman" we mean here as elsewhere "engaged to a person other than the abductor." The engaged man, however, does not have any greater rights over his fiancée than he has over an unengaged girl. To abduct the girl with whom he is betrothed is punishable just as any other case of abduction. If someone captures a girl engaged to another man, the Kurin *adat* demands a double payment of all engagement expenses incurred by the offended lover plus Rs. 60, which he must pay to the lover; besides this he must pay Rs. 200 to the girl's father. If the woman happened to be married, Rs. 60 go to the offended husband and Rs. 300 maximum to her father.

(3) Besides paying usual *kalym*, the abductor is obliged to give the father of the girl a sum of Rs. 300 on demand. The father need not consent to a marriage with his abducted daughter. If the abducted woman is engaged to another man, the ravisher is obliged to give the offended lover twice the sum the latter spent by reason of his engagement.

(4) If the abductor wishes to marry her, he must make an agreement regarding the *kebin* and the father of the girl may demand as reparation as much as Rs. 600. If the girl was engaged to another man, the girl's family must return all engagement gifts to the offended lover, who may take blood-vengeance on the abductor.

(5) The *adat* does not mention any special bloodwite: four oxen, however, must be given to the community as a fine, and the family of the abducted has a right to a feast at the expense of the ravisher. Cooperators never become blood-enemies.

(6) The offended family is compensated by payment of such things as wheat. A fine also must be paid to the community.

(7) If the abductor receives the consent of the girl's family to marry her, he must pay a fine of seven oxen to the community, give the girl's family Rs. 100 (only Rs. 50 if a widow or divorcée), and Rs. 100 to the girl (Rs. 50 if widow or divorcée).

(8) No blood-enmity is incurred; a fine of Rs. 12 must be paid to the community; the abductor is banished till reconciled by payment of Rs. 8 to the family and Rs. 12 to the community. For each visit to his village during the period of banishment he is fined one ox worth Rs. 8.

(9) If the abductor receives permission to marry the abducted, he must pay fine of Rs. 3 to community and give an ox and three *sabs* of wheat to her family.

(10) The banishment lasts 40 days. If the girl's parents refuse to give her in marriage to the abductor, he must allow her to return and must pay a fine of two oxen. He must give special compensation to her family if they consent. Cf. ADO, p. 90.

583 The TURKS of Caucasia have recourse to bride-stealing just as often as the other peoples of Caucasia.[77] In fact, formerly the Tartars considered bride-stealing as something praiseworthy. A young man, who would capture his beloved at the risk of his life and perhaps in so doing murder a brother or the father of the girl, would be envied by all his companions.[78]

Hence, kidnapping girls, widows and divorcées with the intention of keeping them as wives is, or at least, has been, a universal custom in the Caucasus. We intentionally enumerate "girls, widows and divorcées" because capture of married women against their will seems always to have been very exceptional. To mention only a few examples—according to the *adat* collections, no such case seems to have ever occured in the District of Usisha[79] or in the District of Hyuraki.[80] Elopement, of course, occurs more frequently.

Before we pass on to the section on marriage by elopement, we wish to say a word about "bride-capture" planned by the families of the bride and groom. This is simply an unorthodox way of marrying off a daughter in order to avoid the long procedure of matchmaking and betrothal[81] or to avoid the enormous expenses of an ordinary engagement.[82]

§ 3. BY ELOPEMENT

1. General Statement

That a change from abduction to elopement, as the general practice, has taken place in Abkhazia cannot be denied. That Sejdlitz, being the head of the special statistics committee in the Caucasus, was in a position to be very well-acquainted with such matters as bride capture and "planned capture" cannot be denied either. We do beg to differ, however, in regard to the *suddeness* of this change. According to Seidlitz, in 1880 actual kidnapping of wives is supposed to have been the ordinary form of acquiring a mate; in 1894 this general practice is supposed to have been substituted by "planned capture." It is not the change that we deny but its *suddeness*. Fifteen years[83] would hardly be sufficient to put an end to such a general practice. It may very well be that Seidlitz is judging by official decisions of Russian courts. It is quite true that if a girl is asked whether she was captured against her will or not, she will infallibly claim that she even had begged her lover to "kidnap" her. Her

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[77] Balkarians: N. A. Karaulov, "Bolkari na Kavkaze," SMOMPK, XXXVIII (1908), No. 1, p. 146.
Kumyks and Nogai: "Adaty žitelej kumyskoj ploskosti," SSKG, VI (1872), pp. 15 f; Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 277; Semenov, "Očerki narodnych obyč. Kumykov," p. 77.
Kurds: J. Jankó, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[78] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, ii, p. 364.

[79] "Adaty Darginskich Obščestv," SSKG, VII (1873), p. 105, *note*.

[80] "Adaty Darginskich Obščestv," p. 91, *note*.

[81] Ladyzenskij, FT, p. 197.

[82] Grabovskij, "Ekonomičeskij i domašnij byt žitelej gorskago učastka Inguleskago okruga," SSKG, III (1870), p. 21.

[83] Seidlitz, "Die Abchasen," *Globus*, LXVI (1894), p. 40.

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witnesses will confirm her statement regardless of the truth or falsehood asserted 583
for we have here a typical case of a *casus perplexus* which not only the Abkhaz but all the mountaineers must frequently face: if the girl and her witnesses tell the truth, the Russian (Soviet as well as pre-Soviet) court will declare the marriage null and void; but not to marry the ravisher *post factum* and after the kidnapper has had sexual intercourse with her and has offered sufficient *kalym*, would according to customary law be a disgrace to the entire family and an evident sign of ill-breeding.[84] In other words, practically every case brought before the North Caucasian courts has been declared as elopement, and it is perhaps this fact that Seidlitz overlooked. Today, of course, whenever a case of abduction is reported among the NORTHWESTERNERS we may rightly presume that it is merely another case of elopement.[85]

The adat collections of NORTHEASTERN CAUCASUS make a sharp distinction between actual and planned capture, clearly showing that both forms occurred among them.

In SOUTH CAUCASUS both forms were also known, for example, to the Pshavs; but today, as anywhere else, elopement is frequent while actual abduction is very rare.[86]

2. Problems regarding Marriage by Capture and Elopement

If we compare the more reliable, older reports with those of more recent times, a definite change is noticeable throughout the Caucasus from frequent capture by force to "capture" by mutual consent. In explaining the disappearance of the former and the rapid growth of the latter, we must keep in mind especially what we have said about the bride's freedom of choice. Formerly the preference of the Caucasian girl was hardly considered, and she, on her part, took it for granted that it just *had* to be so. Thanks especially to Islamism and Russian legislation, the family, so to speak, became more and more conscious that girls too had preferences which ought to be respected, and the family began to consider her wishes more and more, so much so that the girl herself not only became fully aware of her preferences but also that she had a will of her own, a will that could oppose the sacred *patria potestas* and then be defended by an authority above that of the father. If she noticed that she was in danger of being married off to a man she did not love or if she felt greatly attracted to a certain young man, she would under the guise of the old custom of actual bride capture allow herself to be "kidnapped." She would send a message to her lover—a few words would suffice—"Steal me" and her lover would be only too glad to do so.[87] The formality of mutual consent in marriage required by Islamic law (*supra*, pp. 78 f), even though it was a mere formality, and the insistance of the Russian Military Courts as well as those

[84] Cf. A. H. Günther, "Zusammenstöße zwischen Gesetz und Gewohnheitsrecht im nördlichen Kaukasus," *Zeitschr. f. vergl. Rechtsw.*, XLVI (1931), pp. 338 ff.
[85] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 197.
[86] Makalatija, "Iz starogo narodnogo byta pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, p. 102.
[87] Cf. Günther, *op. cit.*, p. 336.

583 of the Soviet Government on perfect freedom in mating, certainly contributed, especially psychologically, to the change from frequent marriage by capture to elopement.

An important problem, which perhaps will remain a problem for some time to come, is that regarding the origin of Caucasian marriage by capture. At least negatively we can unhesitatingly affirm that abduction is not a survival of *the* original form of marriage.[88] It seems rather to be the most logical result of marriage by purchase. The origin of the practice is more easily explained by high *kalym* rather than primitive "savagery." The main occasion for kidnapping a wife, formerly as well as in recent times, has always been the inability of the groom's family to amass the enormous bride wealth demanded.[89] The refusal of the girl's family to give her in marriage to her lover is often occasion for bride capture or elopement; but the ultimate reason for the refusal is almost always an economic one. When a sib or family cannot afford [581] the required *kalym*, the only means of acquiring a wife is to capture her. To remain unmarried is as unthinkable as the extinction of a family. When the *kalym* is too high, the lover, accompanied by his friends, organizes an attack, kidnaps the girl he loves, and generally deflowers her on the very first occasion. Even if afterwards the abducted girl be allowed to return to her family (and sometimes the *adats* insist on her return), she no longer can expect to find another husband. Her choice is therefore between remaining unmarried all her life or to be the wife of her capturer. Once the girl has been abducted, the young man has the girl's family, so to speak, at his mercy. To borrow Baddeley's words, "With the mountaineers the accomplished fact meant much. Once bedded, though not yet wedded, the quarrel, till then deadly, became, as a rule, mere matter for adjustment—mainly financial adjustment."[90] Her family realize that the girl has lost her economic value and that now, after all, the best thing to do is to let her ravisher have his way. To marry her off to another man would disgrace the family. The capturer has the upper hand and can set the *kalym* more or less according to his limited means.[91]

We do not deny the possibility of other motives for bride capture. We can very well imagine how an Ingush "dare-devil" might organize a raid and kidnap a girl just to prove his mettle.[92] We can also very well imagine how a romantic Kabardian might kidnap his beloved just to add a bit of zest and charm to courtship. But such motives are extremely rare and insignificant compared to the inability to pay the *kalym* demanded.

583 Although bride capture and elopement are general, as general as high *kalym* 583 and poverty, nowhere in the Caucasus are they regarded as a legitimate means. The *adats* of all Caucasians classify marriage by capture and elopement as an offense equal to murder. They are an offense against the bride's relatives, living

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[88] Cf. J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History*, pp. 9 ff.

[89] Cf. Dirr, AGKB, p. 125; Leontovič, II, p. 252, § 150; Jakovlev, *Ingušī*, pp. 52 f.

[90] Baddeley, *The Rugged Flanks of Caucasus*, II, p. 224, *note*.

[91] Cf. Günther, *op. cit.*, pp. 331—340; N. F. Grabovskij, "Očerk suda i ugolovnych prestuplenij v Kabardinskom okrugě," pp. 39, 41 f; Leontovič, II, p. 257, § 198; Leontovič, II, p. 118, § 18.

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as well as departed, a degradation of her womanly dignity, a serious usurpation of the inviolable *patria potestas*.[93] To borrow Baddeley's words again: "Woe betide the gay lover should the fleetness of his horse fail to place between him and his pursuers the barrier of a black night . . . if caught in the first hot pursuit, the hero of the escapade paid for his love and daring with his life, the daggers of the vengers sheathed in his heart . . ."[94]

When a daughter elopes (runs away or is "captured") she too is in constant danger of being killed by her own family, till, of course, reconciliation takes place. Fortunately, everywhere among the mountain tribes the customary law requires all to give shelter and protection to the "bride" and "groom," however in separate *saklias* (houses) or rooms.[95]

Besides seriously endangering his life, the capturer is obliged to pay certain additional fines, as is the case in the NORTHWEST, for example, among the Kabardians,[96] and in the NORTHEAST among the Lesghians[97] and Ingushi.[98] In Ingushetia the *adats* demand the liberation of the abducted woman and a fine of Rs. 50 from the abductor and Rs. 15 from all who cooperated with him.[99] On account of the many details and repetitions involved we present the Leshian *adats* in the form of a table (Table 12). The SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS, the Khevsurs, have an additional penalty known as *banse shekhtoma*, i. e., reconciliation "by jumping on the roof," which consists in a special feast for the relatives and neighbours of the abducted woman, and a fine of a one- or two-year-old ox and a kettle.[100] The *adats* of the TURKIC peoples of the Caucasus likewise impose additional fines for abduction. The Kumykian and Nogaian *adats* demand full bloodwite as a condition for reconciliation.[101] If the bride refuses to remain with the kidnapper, she must be allowed to return, and, besides, he must give her the full *kebin-khak* (the usual guarantee given to the wife in case of divorce).[102]

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[93] Grabovskij, "Ekonomičeskij i domašnij byt etc.," p. 21.

[94] Cf. Dirr, FT, pp. 125 f; Castagné, *op. cit.*, pp. 271 f; Grabovskij, "Očerk suda i uglovnych prestuplenij v Kabardinskom okruge," p. 36.

[95] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 88 f.

[96] Dirr, FT, p. 126; "Adaty Darginskich Obščestv," SSKG, VII (1873), p. 50.

[97] Grabovskij, "Očerk suda etc." pp. 39, 41 f.

[98] See Table 12.

[99] Leontovič, II, p. 170, § 127.

[100] *ibid.*

[101] Seidlitz, "Gemeinde- und Familienleben der Chewsuren," *Das Ausland* (1891), No. 16, p. 318.

[102] Semenov, "Očerki narodnych obyčaev Kumykov Terskoj Oblasti," *Terskij Sbornik*, II (1892), No. 2, Part 2, p. 77, § 12.

[103] "Adaty žitelej Kumyskoj ploskosti," SSKG, VI (1872), pp. 15 f.

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As soon as the procession reaches the bridegroom's house, his mother takes a plate of honey and smears some on the bride's lips and extends her an official invitation to enter.[51] The honey symbolizes the readiness of the mother-in-law to offer the bride any and every gift, but especially the greatest gift of all, entrance into the household.[52] A pleasant and sweet life awaits her in such friendly surroundings.

Now an ox (or any other head of large cattle)[53] is led before the bride. The ear of the animal is then cut as a sign that from now on it belongs to the bride alone.[54] If the bride stands motionless in the doorway, everyone understands that the bride is still not satisfied and therefore a second animal must be brought before her and its ear must be cut in a similar manner. Sometimes a horse is presented to her instead of two oxen, in which case a clump of hair is cut off the horse's tail, leaving the ear intact.[55] On accepting these gifts, the bride is congratulated, welcomed, honoured with songs and pistol shots, and is then solemnly led across the threshold of the *saklia* by her mother-in-law. Sometimes, as the bride steps over the threshold, the bridegroom, standing behind the door, gives his wife three slight strokes[56] symbolizing his authority over her.[57]

The programme now calls for a tug of war between the villagers and the members of the groom's household. A carpet (the one the bride stepped on when crossing the threshold) is placed between the two groups, everyone taking as good a hold of it as possible and then pulling with all his strength, the villagers pulling away from the house and the others toward it. This is, doubtless, a form of ceremonial bride capture. The winners receive a special delicasy called *airisa*, a mixture of flour, butter and honey, as well as their favourite drink *buza*, while the losers must be satisfied with the drink.[58]

There are two other forms of ceremonial bride capture, found among other Lesghians. In Dido-land the friends of the groom "break" into the bride's house, throw a sheep-skin over her head, and drag her into the street, where the villagers throw filth at her till she reaches her new home. The Andi of T'indi are supposed to have had the following custom: the bride riding on a horse, accompanied by men and women armed with torches and long poles, rides toward the groom who is similarly guarded. When the two groups meet, a mock battle is declared. The parties must try to extinguish each other's torches. In

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[51] Kovalevskij, *l. c.* Amirov omits this ceremony.

[52] This is Kovalevskij's interpretation. Unfortunately our sources fail to mention whether the mother-in-law accompanies her action with words as in the case of other North Caucasians or not.

[53] Amirov, *op. cit.*, p. 31, who mentions the possibility of presenting a horse instead of two oxen.

[54] Kovalevskij, *l. c.*; Amirov, *l. c.*

[55] Amirov, *l. c.*

[56] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 186.

[57] Amirov's and Kovalevskij's interpretation.

[58] Amirov, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 f.

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585 the meantime the bride is handed over to the female relatives of the groom, who
585 bring her to her new home.[59]

Honey is given to the bride a second time, symbolizing the sweetness of married life that one and all wish her.

[606] The bride then sits down on a special bridal chair, and a kettle is placed at her feet as a sign of her subjection to the mother of the household.[60]

The custom of thrice walking round the hearth, the custom that plays such an important role in the Abkhaz, Cherkess, Ossete, and Ingush marriage,[61] is found also among the Lesghians, but, as it seems, only by way of exception. Kovalevskij found it only in one *aul* near the Georgian border.[62]

Toward midnight, when the banqueting has finished, a brother of the bride is given the honour of unveiling her face, her head remaining veiled till she enters the bridal chamber. For this privilege her brother is obliged to bestow a special gift on her.[63, 64]

She now steps into the bridal chamber, while the young people crowd in after her. Whoever succeeds in being the first to throw himself on the bed receives some pastries as prize. This ceremony is called *vurni varis*, that is, "trampling on the bed."[65]

As soon as the groom enters, all leave the room and while the newly-weds are alone, feasting and merry-making continue till morning.[66]

In some parts of Daghestan, as for example in Samur Province, two relatives stand guard at the door of the bridal chamber. On the following day the *testimonium castitatis*, a cloth or a bed sheet, is given to the guards[67] or, in some places, the young husband fires his gun. However, a pistol shot does not always have the same meaning. In Dargwa Province (in the shamkhalate of Tsrk and in the khanate of Mekhtali) it signifies that the bride's hymen has been found perforated;[68] in Sakataly it has the very opposite signification.[69] If the bride is found unchaste, the husband may dismiss her at once, on her very wedding day, retaining all her gifts and dowry. Formerly her angry father would cut off her nose or arm and even kill her.[70]

The wedding may last for another week.[71]

On the seventh day a feast is prepared for an exclusive group of male relatives, on which occasion the groom's father reveals what gift he intends to bestow on his newly married son. (The women relatives hold their own feast.)

[59] Byhan, *La civilisation caucasienne*, pp. 191 f.
[60] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 187.
[61] Dirr, AGKB, p. 25.
[62] Kovalevskij, *l. c.*
[63] Amirov, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[64] The Laks call it *lyazbinkuku* (Kovalevskij, *l. c.*).
[65] Kovalevskij, *l. c.* Amirov calls it *burush-vachis*: *burush* meaning "bad" and *vachis* meaning "trample on."
[66] Gabiev, *op. cit.*, p. 110; Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 187; Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 571.
[67] "Adaty Južno-Dagestanskich Obščestv," SSKG, VIII (1875), p. 72.
[68] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 174.
[69] *ibid.* See also Kovalevskij, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 187 f; Gabiev, *op. cit.*, p. 110; Amirov, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[70] Kovalevskij, *Zakon*, II, p. 201.
[71] Gabiev, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

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585 * See also T. Mtavriev, "Prostonarodnaja svad'ba v Kachetii," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), No. 3, pp. 154—160.

For Gurian customs: N. Deržavin, Svad'ba u Gurijcev-Musul'man v okrestnostjach Batuma," SMOMPK, XXXI (1902), No. 2, pp. 168—176.

For Pshav customs see: Makalatija, "Iz starogo narodnogo byta pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, pp. 105—109.

** The tribes in this column are intended merely to serve as *examples*. We do not wish to imply that the particular custom is not found anywhere else except among the tribes indicated.

The OSSETINE wedding customs are quite interesting and have been fully described by such authors as Kovalevskij,[78] Baddeley,[79] Hahn,[80] Šanaev,[81] and Gatiev.[82] Without going into detail we shall indicate briefly the similarity between the Ossetine wedding and that of the neighbouring North Caucasians.

(1) The *procession* terminates at the home of the groom. The bride is led by her groomsman (*anshuargin*) and a special female attendant (*dzhinarkinmade*).[83]

(2) The formal contract is made in church before their priests in Christian parts of Ossetia,[84] and according to Islamic ritual among the Mohammedans. Both Christian and Mohammedan marriages may take place in the shade of certain holy trees.[85]

● [583] (3) Dramatization of bride-stealing.[86]

(4) The bride and groom are not allowed to meet during the marriage festivities: the bride must remain in her room, attended to by a number of girl-friends, while the groom is living with the best-man.[87]

[606] (5) Submission to the mother-in-law. In the evening the bride is led to the hearth, where she must first bow to the *avsin* (mother of the household) and then smear some fat on the *avsin's* shoes as a sign of submission.[88]

585 842 (6) A child is placed on her lap, as a wish of her friends that she may give birth to many children, especially boys.[89] She is taken to a shrine of Mairem.

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[78] Kovalevskij, *Sovremmenyj obyčaj i drevnij zakon.*

[79] Baddeley, *The Rugged Flanks of Caucasus.*

[80] Hahn, *Bilder aus dem Kaukasus*, pp. 41 ff.

[81] Šanaev, "Svad'ba u severnych Osetin," ("A Wedding among the North Ossetes"), SSKG, IV (1870), pp. 1—30.

[82] Gatiev, "Sueverija i predrazudki u Osetin," SSKG, IX (1876), pp. 18—21. See also: Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, pp. 334—337; "Koe-čto o Digorcach," *Kavkaz* (1887), No. 339 f.

[83] Byhan, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

[84] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 268.

[85] Nansen, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[86] Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, 168 f.

[87] Šanaev, *op. cit.*, p. 27, *note 13*. Cf. also N. Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 336.

[88] Gatiev, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Potidaev, Gorcy severnago Kavkaza, p. 106.

[89] Kovalevskij, *Coutume contemp.*, p. 185.

TABLE 16

Marriage Ceremonies of N. Caucasians And Neighbours

Marriage Ceremonies	Procession			Dramatization of capture	Horse-racing	Both nibs (families) present	Groom absent for large part of wedding	Segregation of bride during wedding	Bride's submission to husband	Wedding elaborate, expensive with much feasting & dancing	Mother-in-law †			Corset ceremony	Proof of Virginity	Child placed on bride's lap	Special wishes for boys	Fire-place ceremony	Gifts to bride from own nib	"Tramping on bed" ceremony	Sword placed over bride's head	Special attendant for groom	Special attendant for bride	Mother plays important rôle	Maternal uncle important rôle	Formal religious contract	Reconciliation ceremony	Predominant Character of Ceremonies
	From groom's house to bride	Return with bride to groom's house	Groom is absent								Invites bride to cross threshold	Offers bride some honey	Bride's submission to														
Abkhaz	+	+	−		+	+		+		+	+	+		+		+	+	+	+	−	+		+	−	−	+		Pastoral
Cherkess	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	−	+	+	+	−	−	+	+	Pastoral
Ingushi	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+		+			?	+	+	+	+	−		+	+	−	−	+		Pastoral
Other Chechens	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+		+				+	+	?	+	−		+	+	−	−	+		Pastoral
Avars	+	+	+	+		+	+		+	+	+	+	+		+	·		?	+	+		+	+	+	−	+		Pastoral + Agrarian
Dargwa	+	+	+	+		+	+		+	+	+	+	+		+			?	+	+		+	+	+	−	+		Pastoral + Agrarian
Other Lesghians	+	+	+	+		+	+		+	+	+	+	+		+				+	+		+	+	+	−	+		Pastoral + Agrarian
Khevsurs	+	+		+		+									+			+		−				+	−	+		Pastoral + Agrarian
Pshavs *	+	+	−			+				+	+	+			+		+	+	+	−		+	+	+	−	+		Pastoral + Agrarian
Tushi												+													+	+		
Ingiloi	+	+													+	·								+	−			
Ossetes	+	+		+		+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+	−	+	+	+	−	−	+		Pastoral
Karachai				+																								

* Cf. Makalatija. "Iz starogo narodnogo byta Pšavov," SE, 1938, No. 1, pp. 105.

† It is usually the mother-in-law.

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§ 2. PROBLEMS AND CONCLUSIONS

Though the wedding ceremonies just described are not without a few traces of a mother-right culture, the wedding as a whole is doubtless typically patriarchal in character.

(1) The wedding procession clearly shows that the marriage is patrilocal, a fact true of all North Caucasian as well as neighbouring tribes. The bride must move into the house of her father-in-law.

(2) The fact that the bride is humiliated before her mother-in-law (not father-in-law), the fact that she is invited into the household by the mother-in-law (not father-in-law), and that it is the mother-in-law (not father-in-law) who places the honey into the mouth of the bride, though very suspiciously matriarchal, is reconcilable with a strictly patriarchal society. Even in a strictly patriarchal society the mother of the household enjoys certain privileges and is looked upon as the mistress of the house with special authority over the female members of the household. In other words, in these seemingly matriarchal ceremonies the mother-in-law may perhaps be simply excercising a right of the mother of the household of a typical patriarchal family.[103]

(3) The dramatization of bride capture is a very common custom among the pastoral peoples throughout the world.

Ceremonial bride capture must not be considered as a survival of actual marriage by capture. This is especially true of the Caucasians because a wedding always means a great economic loss for the bride's family—one of their workers must leave them and go over to another sib. Ceremonial bride capture expresses rather the opposition to such an heavy loss. The Dido, as we have seen, actually throw mud and filth at the bride after she has been "stolen". If the ceremony were to represent actual abduction, why should the bride be so "mistreated"? The reason why filth is thrown at her is that she has turned "traitor" to her own family.

(4) The ceremony of hiding, veiling of the face, the bride's taciturnity—all these little peculiarities of the Caucasian wedding may be an expression of the bride's natural sense of modesty. Till now she had to avoid, at least in public, the slightest communication with her financé. The strict separation of engaged couples, the prohibition even to pass a glance at one's future mate in public, and the death penalty imposed on the girl for pre-marital intercourse—all this is in full accord with the high esteem of pastoral peoples for the physical integrity of virgins. At the wedding, the bride is being publicly introduced into a relationship which she has been taught to shun as disgraceful, even punishable by death. Now this once "disgraceful" thing is being done publicly! The bride's resistence, her fleeing, her veiling, her taciturnity, then, are expressions of a reaction against "the great change"[104] from maidenhood to wife, a change more sensibly felt among pastoral peoples than in any other society.

[103] For the relatively important rôle of a mother of a household in a patriarchal society see E. Pčelina, "Obrjad gostepriimstva v Osetii," SE, (1932), No. 5—6, pp. 140—163, especially p. 156, *note*.

[104] "The great change," I think, has been coined by Elsie C. Person. See her "Holding back in Crisis Ceremonialism," *American Anthropologist*, n. s. XVIII (1916), pp. 44 f.

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We have given a number af examples (*supra*, p. 150) illustrating how Ossetine fathers and mothers are forbidden to take their children in their arms, or by hand, or offer them anything, in the presence of older members of the family. The Ossete would permit his child to die rather than transgress this rule.

A woman may never in her whole life speak to an older male member of her husbands's family, and if, for instance, the wife of a younger brother is busy at the hearth, an elder brother is not allowed to enter the room till she has finished her work.[35]

The neighbouring TURKS observe similar rules of avoidance. Thus the Karachai newly-weds live together for a few months and then the bride must return to her parental home for a period which may last two years. During this time her husband may visit her only secretly.[36] The Nogai will not speak to his wife in the presence of elderly people except in extreme necessity. The wife must always appear veiled before her husband for a year after marriage or till she gives birth to a child.[37] A Kumykian couple may never call each other by name; instead they refer to each other as "him" and "her."[38]

§ 2. PROBLEMS OF POSSIBLE ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES OF AVOIDANCE

We may divide the customs just described into several distinct groups. The following table will show that these rules of avoidance are genuinely Caucasian, found among all North Caucasians and neighbouring peoples.

(1) The first custom which calls for special attention is that requiring the bride to return to her family shortly after marriage and permitting the husband to visit her only secretly. We found this custom in Ossetia, Armenia, Kurdistan, Chechnia, Georgia and among the Caucasian Turks. The Cherkess bride, however, does not return to her own parents but goes to a neighbouring family. This temporary visit-marriage, though still not definitely proven, may be connected with matrilocality, and therefore this custom may be a vestige of a mother-right culture.

It is interesting that the Cherkess bride lives with *strangers* during this period and not with her own family. Ladyženskij[39] considers this practice a vestige of the original form of acquiring a wife, namely bride-stealing. When a bride was stolen she, naturally, had to hide, and here, he argues, we have a clear

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had a similar observance. Among the Kurds the bride would return to her family a few days after her marriage. Her stay with her parents, however, was very short, lasting about three days or so. After receiving some gifts from her family she returned to her husband Cf. Kosven, *l. c.*). The custom of the bride returning to her family after the wedding is also an Armenian practice (*ibid.*).

[35] Baddeley, *l. c.*

[36] Jankó, "Néprajzi, etc." Zichy, *Kaukázusi és középázsia utazásai*, p. 44.

[37] Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, i, p. 279.

[38] Dubrovin, *op. cit.*, I, i, p. 639.

[39] "Zur Erforschung der Rechtsgewohnheiten der Bergvölker des Kaukasus," *Zeitsch. f. Ethnologie*. XLII (1930), p. 242.

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trace of this epoch. He goes on to say that the *kalym* was originally a form of bloodwite demanded for bride-stealing, which later evolved into a means of compensating the family of the bride for the loss of a worker. Although Ladyženskij's interpretations are generally good, we connot agree with him in this particular point. It has never been proven that bride-stealing was the original form of marriage anywhere in the world. Moreover, it seems to be much more probable that bride-stealing resulted from the practice of bride purchase rather than vice versa. That *kalym* evolved from bloodwite is very improbable, especially in the Caucasus, because reconciliation by means of bloodwite seems to be a relatively recent substitution for actual blood vengeance.

(2) The various husband-wife avoidances, such as not mentioning the name of one's husband or wife, not using the second person, avoiding all conversation in public, etc. may be an expression of the superior position of the male sex in Caucasian society (cf. *supra*, pp. 152—159).[40]

(3) The parent and parent-in-law avoidance, the obligatory avoidance of older male relatives of the husband, the prohibition of inquiring about the health of the wife's or husband's relatives, and similar practices are difficult to explain.

Parent-in-law avoidances are certainly among the most universal practices known to man. In fact, this form of avoidance is so universal that Lowie does not hesitate to write, "From the extremely wide range of parent-in-law avoidance, the absolute universality of these rules might be conjectured on the ground that, where unrecorded, the customs have merely eluded notice."[41] In Australia, for example, "it was formerly death for a man to speak to his mother-in-law."[42] In New Britain if a man were speaking accidently with his mother-in-law, the horror of the "crime" would most likely lead to suicide.[43]

The interpretation of parent-in-law taboos has baffled all ethnologists, and a satisfactory answer still has not been given. The parent-in-law avoidance has been connected with exogamy and bride-capture;[44] it has been considered a vestige of matriarchy, an expression of awe for the mistress of the household;[45] it has also been considered as a means to prevent improper intercourse. We may have here a case of convergence, based more on human psychology than on any particular institution; nor is there any reason to attribute the same cause for the practice in all parts of the world. This is but another important ethnological problem that waits to be solved.

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[40] The Caucasians seem to be of the opinion that separation is the best means of fostering conjugal love (cf. Leontovič, II, pp. 254 f, § 176).

[41] *Primitive Society*, p. 88.

[42] Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South East Australia*, p. 267.

[43] H. H. Romilly, "The Islands of the New Britain Group," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, n. s. IX, p. 9.

[44] Cf. A. H. Post, "Ueber die Sitte, nach welcher Verlobte und Ehegatten ihre gegenseitigen Verwandten meiden," *Globus*, LXVII (1895), pp. 176 f.

[45] Cf. R. Briffault, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 266 f.

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IV. CONCLUSION

Chapter XIV

Conclusion

§ 1. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY OF THE CAUCASIANS IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY

1. Russian (Soviet and Pre-Soviet) Influence

That the Russian military, political, and cultural influence has greatly affected, changed and unified, the marriage and family customs of the various peoples of the Caucasus cannot be denied. We need but recall some of the many facts we have pointed out in our comparative study. 177.58 583

(1) The Russians, we have seen, severely prosecute *polygyny* (*supra*, p. 39) and not without success. The relative scarcity of polygamous unions throughout North Caucasus and the neighbourhood, regardless of how ethnically different the tribes may be, must be attributed, at least in part, to Russian legislation. 177.59 595

(2) In recent times both mates have begun to enjoy greater *freedom of choice*, (*supra*, p. 76), thanks to the Russian insistance on freedom in mating as a *conditio sine qua non* for a legally valid marriage. [584]

(3) We have also observed how rapidly *bride purchase* was disappearing or assuming an entirely different significance throughout the Caucasus, again, at least in part, owing to Russian legislation, industrialization, and education (*supra*, pp. 83, 87, 90). [583]

(4) *Bride price, bloodwite*, etc. were formerly measured in cows, horses, sheep, and oxen, but now they are measured in money : not in live stock but in Russian rubles ! (*Supra*, pp. 82—89, 95, 168—179).

(5) The Russian opposition to *bride capture* has helped to make the practice become rare (*supra*, pp. 97 f). It was Russian positive law gaining ascendency over the *patria potestas* and its insistance on freedom of choice that encouraged and even defended elopement (*supra*, p. 98).

(6) The general disappearance of slavery and the associated sociological consequences, e. g., *the marriage impediments*, [582] 567

(7) the *less severe penalties for sex crimes* which are gradually being adopted by all tribes of Caucasia (*supra*, pp. 175, 180). 177.68 684

(8) and the improvement in the *status of the female sex*, all must be reckoned among the effects of Russian and Soviet influence. 177.56 562

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(6) The *maternal uncle* appears on the scene in marriage and family affairs as an important figure. A special part of the bride price (*madi-arvadai-kal*) of the Ossetes is reserved for the maternal uncle.[56] Among the Ingushi and a number of other tribes in North Caucasia, if someone drinks to the health of his friend's sister and then gives him a present, the friend is obliged to arrange a marriage between his sister and his friend, otherwise a blood-feud will be the result. This custom, as we have said, overrules even the inviolable *patria potestas* and all the *adats* regarding the choice of mates. It is, as it were, an acceptance of the bride price by the brother ("maternal uncle") without handing the bride over to the purchaser.[57] Moreover, an Ingush lad, after reaching the age when he is allowed to carry arms, has a right to a special present from his maternal uncle. In fact, the youth may go and steal the present with impunity, because he has a *right* to it.[58] This, I think, may very easily be a vestige of a former inheritance rule through the maternal uncle.[59] The Khevsur orphan automatically falls to the guardianship of the maternal uncle.[60] Kovalevskij conjectures that the Georgian institution known as *tsatsali*[61] may be a vestige of the custom to adopt a maternal uncle.[62]

Kovalevskij, Post and other ethnologists of the 19th century "found" an astoundingly large number of "undeniable" vestiges of a former matriarchal culture in the Caucasus. Any custom that would fit into the false principle "mater certa, pater incertus" was "infallibly" a matriarchal vestige. Thus the *atalyk*,[63] the taboos forbidding a father to carry his own child, the prohibition for anyone to ask about the health of another person's wife or child, etc.[64] were all "vestiges" of former matriarchy. The Cherkess *tleush*[65] and the Ingush *taipa*[66] were likewise "vestiges." Kovalevskij's article "La famille matriarcale au Caucase"[67] is a typical example of the matriarchy mania under which the scientists of the past century laboured. Every now and then they would come across a true vestige or a possible indication of matriarchy or mother-right, and these we have incorporated in the present work. The other "vestiges" we have rejected and offered other, more plausible explanations and interpretations.

Russian interest in the problem of mother-right has again been revived. The Russian ethnologist maintains that matriarchy was universal at one time: it was a stage through which all civilizations had to pass, while patriarchy is only

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[56] *Supra*, p. 87.

[57] *Supra*, p. 101. A Berže, Čečnja i čečency, p. 98; Leontovič, II, pp. 251 f, § 149; Kovalevskij, "La famille matriarcale au Caucase," *L'Anthropologie*, IV (1893), pp. 271 f.

[58] Jakovlev, *Ingušı*, p. 47.

[59] This seems to be a genuine vestige.

[60] Kovalevskij, *op. cit.*, p. 273. The maternal uncle also plays an important part in the Khevsurian blood-feuds (Hahn, *Aus dem Kaukasus*, p. 273).

[61] *Supra*, p. 182.

[62] Kovalevskij, *l. c.*

[63] *Supra*, p. 57.

[64] *Supra*, pp. 149 f, 162—167.

[65] *Supra*, p. 55.

[66] *Supra*, p. 84.

[67] *L'Anthropologie*, IV (1893), pp. 259—278. See also Kovalevskij's *Zakon*, I, pp. 3—27.